

The Kentucky Inquirer



Vol. XXI

THURSDAY, APRIL 1861

Editor: Kenneth Tuckerson Pennyroyal Region

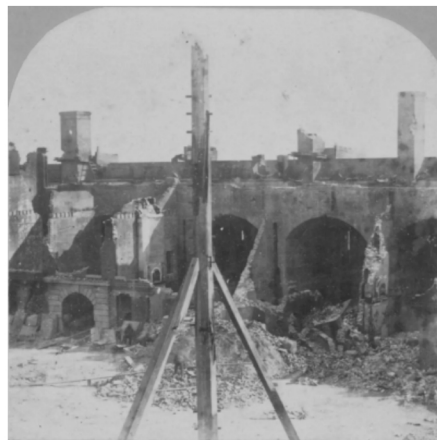
A NATION AT WAR! FORT SUMTER ATTACKED BY CONFEDERATE FORCES

Written by Kenneth Tuckerson

Whispers of war erupt into screams as the news breaks out that Fort Sumter was attacked and seized by Confederate troops earlier in the month, on April 12 1861. While no casualties have been reported, this attack is none but a blatant declaration of war, pitting the Northern and Southern states in the bloody conflict that many in the country have feared for the months. Having been a point of contention since South Carolina's secession from the United States, the unfinished Fort Sumter was where Major Anderson moved his command late last December, fearing that the Fort Moultrie where his troops had been stationed would be insufficient to hold against a South Carolinian militia.

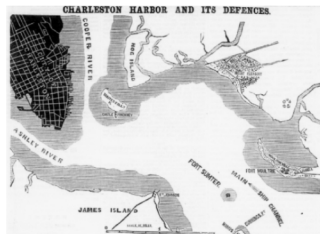
In the months since, the Fort had been a point of contention, with Confederate troops demanding the surrender of the base, and Northern Major Robert Anderson being given orders not to shirk his station. For your convenience, a map of the Charleston Harbor has been included in this article. Additionally, a firsthand account, including words from Major Anderson is also included later in this issue. Fort Sumter is one of three key military bases that defends Charleston Harbor, and it would be no exaggeration to say that Charleston Harbor is the Confederacy's most important port, as well as the city itself being a key city for the Confederacy.

Given its importance, any attempts to resupply or reinforce the fort or Major Anderson's men is a sign of intending to stay. Since South Carolina recognized itself as separate from the United States, such attempts would be considered invasion and thus a declaration of war in and of itself. That is precisely what happened, as Lincoln would declare his intent to resupply Fort Sumter a couple months after his inauguration. The attack then followed, and from that point, there was no turning back.



Ruins following the bombing on Fort Sumter. Stereographed here is the remains of the main flag mast.

In terms of Kentucky, we have been given an ultimatum. Our legislature, while having acknowledged the right of states to secede, has not come to a concrete decision ourselves on where we stand. Further will be explained in the subsequent editorial in this edition of *The Kentucky Inquirer*, but this must be remembered: we are going into war. We have failed to find a peaceable solution, and the ramifications of such will be upon us. It is on us now to decide where to move forward amidst this war, and hopefully towards a solution that results in the least amount of Kentuckian lives lost. As Speaker, I ask for patience amongst you all during this time. We will find our solution, and we pray to God that it is the one that is the best for the good of Kentucky and her people.



A map of Charleston Harbor and its Defenses, courtesy of The Daily Exchange (Baltimore, MD)

WAR AND THE KENTUCKIAN: A NEUTRAL SOLUTION TO A DIVIDED ISSUE

An Editorial Written by Kenneth Tuckerson

Dear readers of *The Kentucky Inquirer*, we Kentuckians face an arduous decision. With actual violent action taking place between the North and the South, the theoreticals that we have been discussing up to this point have become reality. Conflict has broken out, and in the middle of it lies us. The humble, honorable Kentuckians. Our state stands in the middle, both geologically and ideologically. Our viewpoints and opinions so varied and diverse that the decision to side with the Union or the Confederacy remains hotly debatable, and has been hotly debated by the wonderful gentlemen of the legislature over the past winter. Additionally, regardless of where we decide to stand on the matter, our location as between the two warring regions has us slated to be the largest victims of this war. Our vast farmlands, trampled under blue-shirt and brown-shirt boots. Our cities and towns, occupied and judged not by the quality of its inhabitants or its trade, but by its regional vantage point and ability to withstand bombardment. Most devastatingly of all, our people, caught in the crossfire between two radical groups whose reasoning for peace died long ago. Former Senator David Webster's declaration remains true: "There can be no such thing as peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility." Even the states that haven't seceded yet get caught in the crossfire, and we would be ignorant to forget this crushing reality. We, the legislature, have been given an ultimatum, receiving requests from both the Union and the Confederacy to send troops to fight in the war.

That being said, we of *The Kentucky Inquirer* want to offer to you, the people, every viewpoint on the matter. An informed Kentucky is a strong Kentucky, and we wish to have you see every perspective that defines us, the beautiful kaleidoscope of thought that is Kentucky.

To that avail, this edition of *The Kentucky Inquirer* has remarks from some of the thought leaders within our legislature, each giving their own perspective on the situation. Additionally, we also have included remarks from Inspector General Simon Buckner concerning his efforts to expand the military, and what his hopes are for the future of Kentucky.

For me, I have always been an advocate for the peaceable option. Most of all, I value the lives of people, and it is my feeling that violence is almost never the right option. That being said, one in a political position must be realistic in dealing with the real issues that we contend with, and while the action of picking a side would invite violence, without question, we cannot afford to take inaction, either. You all voted for us to make decisions for the good of you, the people, and we cannot afford to be complacent, for every moment we spend not taking action is us putting you at risk.

With that desire for tact and urgency in mind, the Governor and Inspector General have offered a hopefully peaceful solution that I feel is the most reasonable option at this time: the stance of armed



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we can avoid that possibility and choose the option that secures the most peace for our people.

AN ACCOUNT ON FORT SUMTER

The following is an excerpt of a story recounting the events of the attack on Fort Sumter, published by Harper's Weekly. We at *The Kentucky Inquirer* find it pertinent that you, the people of Kentucky, read this direct account of the beginning of the war, to form your own opinions on the matter.

On 8th April Lieutenant Talbot and Mr. Chew, messengers from the President, informed General Beauregard that the Government would supply Major Anderson with the provisions--peaceably if they could, forcibly if they must. General Beauregard referred the message to his Government at Montgomery, and was ordered to reduce the fort. He summoned Major Anderson to surrender on 11th. The reply was:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication, demanding the evacuation of this fort, and to say, in reply thereto, that it is a demand with which I regret that my sense of honor and my obligations to my Government prevent my compliance."

Accordingly at 4:27 A.M. on 12th fire was opened from Fort Moultrie on Fort Sumter. To this Major Anderson replied with three of his barbette guns, after which the batteries on Mount Pleasant, Cummings's



Major Robert Anderson

Point, and the Floating Battery opened a brisk fire of shot and shell. Major Anderson did not reply, except at long intervals, until between seven and eight o'clock, when he brought into action the two tiers of guns looking toward Fort Moultrie and Steven's iron battery. The fire continued brisk all day. At 7 P.M. a heavy rain-storm caused a cessation of hostilities till 11 P.M. Major Anderson appears to have employed the interval in repairing damages. At or about 11 P.M. the fire recommenced, and a shell was thrown into Fort Sumter from each battery every twenty minutes during the night. With daybreak the heavy bombardment recommenced from all the batteries; the fire was returned from Fort Sumter with vigor until about 8 A.M., when Fort Sumter was perceived to be on fire. Major Anderson's fighting then slackened, but the fire of the besiegers increased in intensity. At about 10 A.M. Major Anderson lowered his flag to half-mast in token of distress; perhaps as a signal to the United States vessels which were lying at anchor outside the bar, unable to get into the harbor so as to participate in the conflict. About half past ten one or two explosions took place in the fort; it has since been ascertained that these proceeded from the heating of piles of shells. Meanwhile the fire progressed rapidly; the whole roof of the barracks was a sheet of flame, and flames and smoke issued thickly from the casemates. At or about eleven Major Anderson ceased firing, and devoted his whole attention to putting out the fire. At about noon some of his men were noticed on the wharf of the fort handing in buckets of water; the besiegers' fire, which had never slackened, was at once directed upon them. In a few minutes afterward Major Anderson hauled down his flag. A boat then put off, containing ex-Governor Manning, Major D.R. Jones, and Colonel Charles Allston, to arrange the terms of surrender, which were the same as those offered on the 11th. These were official. They stated that all proper facilities would be afforded for the removal of Major Anderson and his command, together with the company arms and property, and all private property, to any post in the United States he might elect. Major Anderson stated that he

surrendered his sword to General Beauregard as the representative of the Confederate Government. General Beauregard said he would not receive it from so brave a man...

The following is a recounting of Fort Sumter's state following the attacks, from the same edition of Harper's Weekly.

The fort is burned into a mere shell; not a particle of wood-work can be found. The guns on one side of the parapet are entirely dismantled, others split, while the gun-carriages are knocked into splinters. The flames have destroyed every thing. Both officers and soldiers were obliged to lie on their faces in the casemates to prevent suffocation.

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FROM CINCINNATI TO KENTUCKY

The following is an excerpt from the *Cincinnati Daily Inquirer*, an article addressed to Kentucky concerning where they feel our allegiances should lie.

The importance of the action of Kentucky at the present alarming crisis in the fortunes of our country is a sufficient

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apology for our frequent recurrence to this theme... We ask our friends in Kentucky to take note of those who are calling out for secession and war. Are they the men of substance, of large property, who have most to fear from a destruction of constitutional guarantees? On the contrary, are not these satisfied to let Kentucky hold on to her old position of peace and safety and redress of grievances all within the Union? Does not the secession cry come from dissatisfied political demagogues and office-seekers of but little character, who have no material interests in the welfare of



the State? The farmers of Kentucky are prosperous and wealthy. They are realizing high prices and good markets for everything they have to sell; peace and prosperity smile upon them. They do not wish to exchange their happy condition for the misfortunes and ruin that are the necessary consequence of war and secession—especially as their honor has not been insulted or called in question, but have thus far been scrupulously respected.

All party lines and distinctions have been swept away in the North, in the energetic determination now that the issue of arms has at last come to maintain the authority of the Union unimpaired, and the supremacy of the Constitution in all the

States. To attempt to resist it would be folly and madness in the highest degree. Kentucky, brave, gallant and strong as she is, would be powerless to stem the overwhelming Union tide that has set in, and the only effect of her secession would be to go clown into that hopeless gulf of ruin that awaits those who have already taken up arms against the Constitution. As a mediator, loyal to the Union, she may save the Cotton States, and a feeling of sympathy for them, as well as loyalty to the Union, should cause her to assume that position.

A WORD FROM INSPECTOR GENERAL BUCKNER

The following is an excerpt from a letter written to *The Kentucky Inquirer* penned by Inspector General Simon Buckner. This is in response to an inquiry we made asking about his reasons for the rapid expansion of the Kentucky State Guard as of late.

The repeated recruitment of troops and expansion of the Kentucky state guard should not concern the great people of Kentucky. We are building up our defenses in order to protect the people of this state from any potential external threats. We are in a time where showing weakness could mean losing the property and lives we have built up till now, so I encourage any able-bodied men in your district to volunteer themselves. We are pursuing armed neutrality, meaning we will not rush into war, just protect the peace of our state.

THE LEGISLATURE ON SECESSION

The next two portions of this newspaper are responses from two thought leaders in the Kentucky Legislature. They have both been asked to share their thoughts and comments regarding their stances on secession, and how they feel Kentucky should act going forward.

This first portion is an excerpt from Mr. Eric Fire-Eater in a letter addressed to *The Kentucky Inquirer*. For context, Mr. Fire-Eater recently called for a sovereignty convention, where Kentucky Legislatures must come to a consensus on if we should secede or stay with the Union.

My stance on secession is that it is not just an option but is imperative to Kentucky to preserve her honor and our way of life. The longer we are bound to the ill Union that disregards our interests, the more we lose control of our destiny. What we as Kentuckians have to gain for seceding is our God-given right to govern ourselves without any outside interference. We gain the ability to defend our beliefs and control over our economy. I understand the risk, though; the idea of secession is an idea of division. However, I argue that this is only a small price to pay for the pursuit of our liberty. I believe that delay would only weaken us. By calling this Sovereignty Convention, I hope that the people of Kentucky may decide their fate without obstruction.

The following segment is an excerpt from a letter written to *The Kentucky Inquirer* from Mister Bawyer Binton. He is a prominent legislator from the Cumberland Plateau.

Kentucky should not in any way secede

Colophon

This week's edition of *The Kentucky Inquirer* was overseen, written, and edited by Kenneth Tuckerson.

Stereograph of Fort Sumter ruins from the Robert. G Stanford Collection, *Library of Congress* (accessed via <https://time.com/4281331/fort-sumter-photos/>)

Map of Charleston Harbor and its Defenses, Courtesy of *The Daily Exchange (Baltimore, MD)*, Archived in the Library of Congress (<https://www.loc.gov/resource/sn83009573/1861-04-12/ed-1/?sp=1>)

Quoted: David Webster's "Seventh of March" Speech (https://www.ushistory.org/documents/seventh_of_march.htm)

Quoted: Inspector General Simon Buckner's March Address to the Kentucky Legislature (Note: Speech given in class, not actual Simon Buckner)

Account on Fort Sumter, Courtesy of *Harper's Weekly, a Journal of Civilization* (<https://archive.org/details/harpersweeklyv5bonn/page/256>)

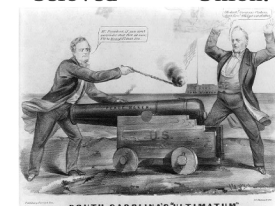
Kentucky and the Union, from the *Cincinnati Daily Inquirer* (<https://www.historians.org/sixteen-months/kentucky-and-the-union/>)

Advertisements and Illustrations, Courtesy of *Harper's Weekly, a Journal of Civilization* (<https://archive.org/details/harpersweeklyv5bonn/>)

Illustration of Major Robert Anderson, Courtesy of *The New York Illustrated News* (<https://newseumed.org/tools/artifact/newspaper-article-recounts-ft-sumter-1861>)

South Carolina's "Ultimatum" published by Currier and Ives, Courtesy of the *Library of Congress* (<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2003674566/>)

A special thank-you to Misters General Simon Bolivar Buckner Jr., Bawyer Binton, and Eric Fire-Eater for their responses.



SOUTH CAROLINA'S ULTIMATUM
Political Cartoon published earlier in the year by Currier and Ives